

CLAIMS:

What is claimed is:

1. A method for distributing information in a computer network, the method comprising:
 - 5 dividing an electronic file into a plurality of pieces;
 - receiving a request for a file piece from a first client machine;
 - 10 downloading the requested file piece to the first client machine;
 - receiving a request for said file piece from a second client machine; and
 - 15 redirecting the request of the second client machine to the first client machine.
2. The method according to claim 1, further comprising:
 - 20 downloading all file pieces to a plurality of client machines, wherein the client machines function as peer-to-peer servers for other client machines requesting said file pieces.
3. The method according to claim 2, wherein each peer-to-peer server stores a unique file piece.
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4. The method according to claim 2, further comprising:
 - receiving a request for a file piece stored in a first peer-to-peer server which is no longer connected to the computer network;

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redirecting said request to a second peer-to-peer server containing a copy of said file piece; and

removing the first peer-to-peer server from a list of available peer-to-peer servers.

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5. The method according to claim 2, further comprising:
sending a digest for a file piece to each client machine which has received that file piece.

10 6. The method according to claim 5, further comprising:
receiving a message from a client, wherein the

message indicates that a peer-to-peer server has corrupted a file piece;

disconnecting the peer-to-peer server responsible
15 for corrupting said file piece; and
retransmitting said file piece to said client,
wherein the retransmitted file piece is free of any corrupting content.

20 7. A method for distributing information in a computer network, the method comprising:

requesting one of a plurality of pieces of an electronic file, wherein the electronic file is stored in a server;

25 receiving the requested file piece from the server;
receiving a request for said file piece from a client machine, wherein the request is redirected from the server; and

sending said file piece to said client machine.

DRAFTING STYLING AND FORMATTING

8. A method for obtaining distributed information in a computer network, the method comprising:

requesting one of a plurality of pieces of an electronic file, wherein the electronic file is stored in
5 a server;

receiving the requested file piece from a client machine containing a copy of said file piece.

9. A computer program product in a computer readable medium for use in a data processing system, for distributing information in a computer network, the computer program product comprising:

instructions for dividing an electronic file into a plurality of pieces;

15 instructions for receiving a request for a file piece from a first client machine;

instructions for downloading the requested file piece to the first client machine;

20 instructions for receiving a request for said file piece from a second client machine; and

instructions for redirecting the request of the second client machine to the first client machine.

10. The computer program product according to claim 9,
25 further comprising:

instructions for downloading all file pieces to a plurality of client machines, wherein the client machines function as peer-to-peer servers for other client machines requesting said file pieces.

PROVISIONAL PATENT APPLICATION

11. The computer program product according to claim 10,
wherein each peer-to-peer server stores a unique file
piece.

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12. The computer program product according to claim 10,
further comprising:

instructions for receiving a request for a file
piece stored in a first peer-to-peer server which is no
10 longer connected to the computer network;

instructions for redirecting said request to a
second peer-to-peer server containing a copy of said file
piece; and

15 instructions for removing the first peer-to-peer
server from a list of available peer-to-peer servers.

13. The computer program product according to claim 10,
further comprising:

20 instructions for sending a digest for a file piece
to each client machine which has received that file
piece.

14. The computer program product according to claim 13,
further comprising:

25 instructions for receiving a message from a client,
wherein the message indicates that a peer-to-peer server
has corrupted a file piece;

instructions for disconnecting the peer-to-peer
server responsible for corrupting said file piece; and

30 instructions for retransmitting said file piece to
said client, wherein the retransmitted file piece is free
of any corrupting content.

PENDING - DRAFT

15. A computer program product for distributing information in a computer network, the method comprising:
 - instructions for requesting one of a plurality of 5 pieces of an electronic file, wherein the electronic file is stored in a server;
 - instructions for receiving the requested file piece from the server;
 - instructions for receiving a request for said file 10 piece from a client machine, wherein the request is redirected from the server; and
 - instructions for sending said file piece to said client machine.

15 16. A computer program product for obtaining distributed information in a computer network, the method comprising:
 instructions for requesting one of a plurality of pieces of an electronic file, wherein the electronic file is stored in a server;
20 instructions for receiving the requested file piece from a client machine containing a copy of said file piece.

17. A system for distributing information in a computer
25 network, the system comprising:

- a dividing component which divides an electronic
file into a plurality of pieces;
- a first receiver which receives a request for a file
piece from a first client machine;
- 30 a communications component which downloads the
requested file piece to the first client machine;
- a second receiver which receives a request for said

file piece from a second client machine; and
a redirecting component which redirects the request
of the second client machine to the first client machine.

5 18. A system for distributing information in a computer
network, the system comprising:

a first communications component which requests one
of a plurality of pieces of an electronic file, wherein
the electronic file is stored in a server;

10 a first receiver which receives the requested file
piece from the server;

a second receiver which receives a request for said
file piece from a client machine, wherein the request is
redirected from the server; and

15 a second communications component which sends said
file piece to said client machine.

19. A system for obtaining distributed information in a
computer network, the system comprising:

20 a communications component requesting one of a
plurality of pieces of an electronic file, wherein the
electronic file is stored in a server;

a receiver which receives the requested file piece
from a client machine containing a copy of said file
25 piece.

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